

## For the Children

### HIS VALENTINES.

By Madeline S. Bridges.

To Maud I'll send a valentine  
All tinsel, bows and gilded lace;  
She's such a young sweetheart of mine  
That gifts like these will be in place;  
She'll dance for joy, because, you see,  
My sweetheart Maud is only three!

To my old sweetheart, grandma dear,  
I'll send a parcel, trim and neat;  
Contents I need not mention here—  
Something to wear, or drink, or eat,  
No matter! She'll consider it  
The valentine for her most fit.

For quiet May I'll buy and send  
A pretty book to read betimes  
(She my good comrade is, and friend);  
To saucy Lil some saucy rhymes;  
To Ethel flowers; and then—ah, well,  
To her whose name I will not tell."

Whose tender eyes before me shine,  
Whose sweet face haunts me, angel  
fair,  
I dare not write a valentine,  
I breathe instead a trembling prayer,  
(So dear she is, so far apart),  
And send her, silently, my heart.

### PERCY'S NEW START.

By Sarah N. M'Greery.

Percy's mother found him seated on the well platform crying bitterly. "What's the matter?" she asked in surprise.

"Three of my calves are dead," he sobbed. "They bloated on the clover; at least, papa said that was the trouble. I have only two left," and Percy's head went down on his knees again.

"I am very sorry, my son, but you must be braver about it. A man must expect to have some difficulties when he is in business. You remember your father had a cow killed by lightning last month."

"Come on, Percy," Mr. Thurston called, "we will take the hides to town. You can sell them for something and put the money into more stock."

Percy dried his tears and no more was heard about his misfortune that day. The next morning he came to breakfast with an eager face. "Papa," said he, "I want to sell you my two calves. I have decided to quit the cattle business and keep horses."

"Well, that's news. How much do you want for your calves?"

"I will trade them for Beth, the year-old colt." Percy felt he was almost a man to talk business in this way.

"You are a good trader," his father said, laughingly. "You will get the best of the bargain, but you have had bad luck, so I'll do it."

"And I want to buy Uncle Sherman's black colt; may I? I have ten dollars in the bank, the hides sold for five, and I could pay the rest later. You don't always pay for a thing when you buy it." Percy feared his father would not consent.

"How do you know your uncle wants to sell him?" was the next inquiry.

"I don't know, but I'll ask. I'll give Uncle Sherman money just as I earn it. You know I'm to feed and slop the pigs, and you expect to pay me."

"All right," his father answered; "if you and your uncle can agree, and he will trust you for part of the money, I have no objection."

As soon as breakfast was over Percy set out for his uncle's.

"Uncle Sherman, I have come to see you on business," was his greeting.

"I am at your service. Do you wish to step into my private office?" his uncle asked, teasingly.

"Now, uncle Sherman, don't tease," he pleaded, "for I'm in earnest." Then he told his uncle what he wanted, and at the end of an hour the bargain was made and Percy led the colt home. "He's mine, and I brought him right home," he called to his father.

"Thirty-five dollars. I gave Uncle Sherman five dollars; I'm to take him a check for ten the next time I go over, and I'll pay the rest as I get it," he explained.

"Thirty-five dollars," repeated Mr. Thurston. "You will have to work hard to earn twenty more."

Percy did work hard and faithfully for his father that fall, but at the end of the year \$9 remained unpaid. New Year's Day was to be spent at his grandmother's, and in his deepest pocket was his Christmas dollar.

"I got a dollar for Christmas," he said to his uncle before he even said "Happy New Year." "I'll pay it to you and I'll only owe eight more. It takes a long time to earn twenty, don't it?" and he sighed deeply. He had hoped his uncle would refuse that dollar.

"This experience will teach you the value of money. Think how patient I have been to wait for the money until you earned it. It isn't every uncle who would do that much.

"I think I'll not buy anything more until I have the money to pay for it," replied Percy. "I never have a bit to spend on myself this way."

"I'll tell you, Percy," said his Uncle Lawrence, who had heard the conversation. "I'll finish paying that debt for you. This is the beginning of a new year, and I'll give you a new start. I don't like to see a man begin the year in debt. Now you can commence over," and he handed his brother a \$5 bill and three silver dollars.

"Uncle Lawrence, you are just good," was all Percy could say for a minute. "I'll never get in debt again," he added.

"Isn't it strange," he said to his mother, when he told her of the incident later, "that one can have so much fun with Uncle Sherman, but Uncle Lawrence is the one who helps a fellow in trouble? I think I'll be an Uncle Lawrence kind of man," he finished thoughtfully.—Herald and Presbyterian.

There is nothing noble in being superior to some other man. The true nobility is in being superior to your previous self.—Hindu Sayings.